



CALIFORNIA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 16, 2010

Contact: Andrew T. Medina
Phone: (916) 319-3686

ASSEMBLYMEMBER WARREN T. FURUTANI STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE SIKH COMMUNITY

On March 4, 2011, Surinder Singh and Gurmej Atwal were gunned down during one of their usual afternoon walks in Elk Grove, California. Both men were wearing dastars, a turban worn as an article of faith of the Sikh religion. Assemblymember Warren T. Furutani (D- South Los Angeles County), chair of the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Legislative Caucus, issued the following statement regarding the recent memorial services for Surinder Singh:

“As chair of the Asian Pacific Islander Legislative Caucus, I would like to express my deepest condolences to the family and friends of Surinder Singh. In addition, my thoughts are with his close friend Gurmej Atwal who is still in critical condition at the hospital.

I stand in solidarity with the Sikh community during this time of need. The egregious shooting that took the life of Mr. Singh and critically injured Mr. Atwal has caught the attention of community leaders and government officials across the state. Police are investigating the shooting as a possible hate crime potentially linked to the men’s appearance. I encourage the public to assist the investigation in whatever way they can so that we may find justice for Mr. Singh and the community.

On December 30, 2011, I joined a diverse coalition of community members in celebrating Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution. As a community, we remembered the unfortunate history relative to Executive Order 9066 and Japanese internment. At a time where our nation and state are facing many challenges, our community must remember our history to ensure that we do not scapegoat or attack a particular community. While we are waiting for the investigation to unfold, I plan on tracking this case very closely in support of our Sikh brothers and sisters.”

The API Legislative Caucus was established in 2001 with the mission of representing and advocating for the interests of the diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities throughout California. Additionally, the Caucus seeks to increase Asian Pacific Islander participation and representation in all levels of government. Assemblymember Warren T. Furutani and Assemblymember Mary Hayashi serve as chair and vice-chair, respectively, of the caucus.

###